THOUGHTS
ON
FRIENDSHIP.

By way of ESSAY;

For the USE and IMPROVEMENT of the LADIES.

By a Well-Wisher to her SEX.

SHE has the Substance of all Bliss,
To whom a virtuous FRIEND *is giv'n;*
So sweet harmonious FRIENDSHIP *is,*
Add but Eternity, you make it Heav'n.
NORRIS.

LONDON:

Printed for J. ROBERTS, near the *Oxford-Arms* in *Warwick-Lane.* MDCCXXV.

Price One Shilling.

THOUGHTS

ON

FRIENDSHIP.

BRITISH MUSEUM
30 MAR 89

By way of ESSAY:

For the USE and IMPROVEMENT
of the LADIES.

By a Well-Wisher to the Sex.

Sure 'tis the Sublimest of all Bliss
To endure a virtuous FRIENDSHIP;
To foster harmonious FRIENDSHIP!
And but Heavenly, you make it (Sir)

No.

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THE PREFACE.

THE only Apology I ſhall make, for preſenting the World with the following ESSAY, *is the great neceſſity there appears to be for an Attempt of this kind. And though a late* AUTHOR *has called* FRIENDSHIP, *an exhauſted Subject; yet, from the Effects that have been produced from former Labours, it may very juſtly be concluded, there ſtill remains ſufficient Occaſion for a further proſecution of it. For which, one reaſon may be, that moſt Writers who have at all conſider'd it, have only introduc'd it among other Subjects, in the Body of their Works; which being frequently pretty Voluminous, are therefore not ſo likely to be peruſed by the greateſt part of* OUR SEX; *who may perhaps at a vacant hour have Curioſity enough to peruſe*

this ſhort Tract, ſo ſuitable in Size to ſome of their favourite Novels. Beſides, as every thing of this nature has been hitherto calculated, (as what, indeed, has not?) for the Uſe of the OTHER *Sex, it may be the more difficult to apply thoſe Rules to* OURS: *Who yet certainly deſerve Aſſiſtance upon this Head as much as* THEY *do; and I doubt not, will make as good Improvements from it as* THEY *have ever done, and no great Compliment to them neither.*

SOME, *who have been ſo generous to beſtow their Time and Pains in our Service, (a Favour which we gratefully acknowledge,) have yet very ſlightly touch'd on* FRIENDSHIP, *which is certainly a very important Article in all Syſtems of Morality, and even then, it has been more by way of diſcouragement, and obviating the Misfortunes of an ill-choſen* ONE, *than any Endeavours to rectify* THAT, *by Directions ſuitable to the occaſion. This defect I have endeavour'd to ſupply: And though I am very ſenſible much more might have been ſaid; yet I am not conſcious of the omiſſion of any* ONE ESSENTIAL: *And dare affirm, would the* LADIES *conduct their Contracts*

of

of FRIENDSHIP *by the following Rules, all occaſion of complaint from diſappintments* IN THEM, *would effectually be removed. It can therefore be thought no unreaſonable Requeſt, when I intreat Them to be ſo much their* OWN FRIENDS, *as to make the Experiment; and to allow it as fair a tryal, as they would a Propoſal for Diverſion only; and they will* THEN *have but little reaſon to regret the pains they may perhaps take in* THIS *Purſuit: An Advantage, that does not always attend the preſent* FASHIONABLE *Amuſements.*

As every new Production, eſpecially one that aims at being really uſeful, is liable, in this refin'd and witty Age, to the Cavils and Raillery of ingenious CRITICISM; *So, it is probable,* THIS *may have the honour to ſupply a dull Jeſt, when more Sacred and valuable Subjects are exhauſted, or forgot. But I ſhall be ſo far from Anxiety on this Account, that I ſhould eſteem it the nobleſt Panegyrick that could be beſtow'd on any Performance of* MINE; *ſhould it be thought worthy to ſuffer, by the* SAME HANDS, *and in ſuch* EXCELLENT

COM-

COMPANY, *as* RELIGION, *and all the* SACRED ORDINANCES *of it.*

But if the want of Elegance, in the STILE; *or Artleſs Connection of* ARGUMENT, *be objected by Thoſe who are* JUDGES *of either; I can make no other Defence, but, That a Sincere deſire to Serve the* LADIES, *was the ſole Inducement to this Undertaking; which, ſure, may plead ſome Excuſe for the Errors in* BOTH. *And that* WE *are in general ſo defective in* THEM, *is more* THEIR *faults who are the Teachers, than* OURS *who are the Learners. And would* THEY *be ſo obliging to qualify us for better, it would be a prudent as well as generous Method, to ſecure themſelves againſt mean Performances of this kind. And on the other hand, it may be a ſure Stratagem, to preſent the World ſometimes with an* ILL-WROUGHT *Piece, to procure Inſtructions towards a* GOOD *one. And till ſuch Aſſiſtance is afforded us, we muſt make our utmoſt advantage of that* NATURAL LOGICK *and* RHETORICK, *Heaven has beſtow'd upon us. And as the* AUTHOR

of

of the following Pages is wholly deſtitute of any Rules, but what THEY *ſupplied her with; She here enters a Caveat againſt being Try'd by any* OTHER; *and hopes then to come off, without a very ſevere Sentence. But, after all, it may be truly ſaid of* THIS, *as well as ſome* OTHER *Subjects, That it is* PRACTICE WHICH BEGETS THEORY; *and if I have juſtly explain'd the* LATTER, *it is ſolely owing to a happy Exerciſe of the* FORMER. *Which is not mention'd with any View to* PRIVATE *Advantage; but out of a ſincere Reſpect and Value to ſome Generous* FRIENDS; *who are each a Living Demonſtration, that all thoſe* VIRTUES *hereafter mention'd, and a thouſand nameleſs* GRACES, *may be found in* OUR *Sex: And that the ſhort Sketch, drawn in the* 45*th and following Pages, is no Chimerical, but Real Character. That* ALL *who read it, may tranſcribe it in their Practice, and follow ſuch bright Examples; That* THEY *may be wiſe like*

THEM;

THEM; *and happier in* THEIR *Choice of* FRIENDS, *than* THEY *have been, by honouring* ONE *with that Character, who is conscious of her demerits for so high an Office; is the sincere Desire of*

Their Humble FRIEND,

AND

Well-wisher to

Her Whole SEX.

THOUGHTS

THOUGHTS ON Friendſhip, &c.

IT is a Maxim too often verified, *That the beſt Things, when corrupted, become the worſt*; and are *capable* of doing the moſt Miſchief, when *ill-applied*, or in *unskilful* Hands. And I believe every *one*, who thinks at all, will agree with *me*, that there is not a more *flagrant* Inſtance of it, than in the wretched Profanation of that *Sacred*

cred Compact, Friendſhip. We often hear it talk'd of by *thoſe*, who have either *no Meaning* when they profeſs it, or perhaps a very *baſe one*. *Some* have ſuch extenſive Souls, that whoever will purchaſe the Title, by ſaying a civil Thing to them, immediately are call'd *Friends*; while *others*, never *beſtow* nor *aſſume* that Epithet, but with a Reſolution to betray, whenever their *Power* is equal to their *Malice* and *Treachery*. But as it is a more *friendly* Office to correct Errors, than expoſe them; I ſhall endeavour to proſecute this Work *ſo*, as may beſt anſwer that *End*; the only *one* I have in undertaking it.

But before I proceed any further, it is neceſſary to declare, I do not in the leaſt deſign to dictate to the *Maſculine* Part of the World. I will not ſuppoſe *they* either *want*, or will *accept*, *Advice* from a deſpicable Woman. *They* are form'd too perfect, ſure, to err; or

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if by Miracle they ever do, *we* are too ſhort-ſighted to diſcern an accidental Slip. To the *Inſtruction* and *Improvement* therefore of *them*, who ingenuouſly *own* themſelves the *weaker* Sex, *my* Endeavours, *faint* and *imperfect* as they are, ſhall always be directed. And ſince thoſe *Lords of the Creation* think *us* below *their* Care and Notice; it is but reaſonable *we* ſhould aſſiſt *each other*, and employ all the little Art we have, to our *own* Advantage.

For that End, we will firſt conſider *Friendſhip* in its utmoſt *Latitude*, as *neceſſary* to the Happineſs of Mankind in *general*. And if we take a Proſpect of the *Original* State of Human Nature, we ſhall find it, of all created Beings, moſt truly wretched and forlorn, if deſtitute of a *friendly* Support. For, as *Man* brings nothing into this World with him but *Wants* and *Neceſſities*, and being wholly incapable to ſupply

them by his *own* Power; he muſt inſtantly end his feeble Life, unleſs aſſiſted by *thoſe* who are poſſeſs'd of the *neceſſary Means* of preſerving it. And could we form an *Idea* of a *general Independance*, we ſhould find the Condition of *Mankind* worſe than even that of the fierceſt *Beaſts of Prey*, by how much *our* Capacities of Poſſeſſion exceed *theirs*. And it was doubtleſs from a *full* Conviction of *this*, that they firſt form'd themſelves into *Societies*, and bound themſelves by *mutual* Contracts to aſſiſt each other, *with* the Neceſſaries and Conveniences of Life; and *againſt* the Attempts of *thoſe* who would wreſt theſe Things to their own uſe, without complying with the ſtated Rules of Purchaſe. And as the Indigence of every particular Man, *as ſuch*, is naturally *equal*; ſo their Obligations to aſſiſt *every* Member of the Community is *alſo equal*. And as the *original* State of *Nature* does neceſſarily

rily require the uniting of *ſeveral Individuals*, into *one Community*, or *Body Politick*; ſo we find *this*, and no other, was the Foundation of all *Contracts* of *Friendſhip*, that we have an account of, from the earlieſt Periods of Time. Particularly, the *Covenants* that we read of between *Abimelech* and *Abraham*, and afterwards with *Iſaac*, ſeem to owe *their* Riſe to the neceſſity *each* Side lay under to enjoy the uninterrupted uſe of the common Element of Water; which, however *common*, yet could not be poſſeſs'd without the formality of a *Treaty* and *Covenant*: If *that* therefore could be come at no other way, we may well ſuppoſe nothing elſe could. Gen. xxi. 22. & xxvi. 26.

And if we conſider *Man* with regard to the *inward* State of his *Mind*, as well as the *outward* Condition of his *Body*; we ſhall find *that* as much form'd for the *Pleaſures* of Society,

as

as his *Body* for the *Neceſſities* of it. Nay, ſo ſtrong is this *Propenſity*, and ſo interwoven with the very Nature of his *Being*, that it is *coæval* with it. For, even in *Paradiſe*, GOD, who made *Man*, and therefore certainly beſt knew the Inclinations with which he was endued, declared, *It is not good for Man to be alone*; and therefore, to *compleat his* Happineſs, made him an *Help mete for him*: One endued with the *ſame* rational Faculties with *Himſelf*, and therefore capable, by an endearing Converſation, to render even *Eden* more Bleſs'd.

Gen. ii. 18.

And though it may be *objected*, that this Partner of *his* Solitude was the immediate Cauſe of *Man's Fall*, whereby he loſt his Innocence, and conſequently what gave the higheſt Reliſh to all his *Social* Pleaſures: Yet *this* cannot be admitted as a reaſonable Plea againſt the *neceſſity* of Society; unleſs it can firſt be proved, that *Man* could

could have *fell* by no other means. But as *He* was created a *free Agent*, and conſequently capable of Diſobedience *without* the interpoſition of the *Woman*, therefore *She* muſt not ſtand *ſolely* chargeable with the guilt of the *whole* Crime. And it's very obſervable from the *Hiſtory* of this firſt and fatal Sin, that the Prohibition of the *Tree of Knowledge* was pronounced *ſingly to Adam*: And though in ſeveral places in the *Holy Scripture*, *Order* of *Time* is not *neceſſary*, and therefore not *obſerved*; yet as this firſt Command is recorded to be given before *Adam* had named the *Animal Creation*, which certainly preceded the *Formation* of the *Woman*; and as it is deliver'd in the Singular number, THOU; it is at leaſt *probable*, that *He only* received it *immediately* from GOD himſelf. Which, I think, is a very great Aggravation of *his* Fault; for though *her* diſobeying a Command

Gen. ii. ver. 17. & 19, 20, 21, 22.

con-

convey'd by *Him* can admit no *Excuſe*; it ſeems not to have ſo many Circumſtances of *daring Impiety* in it as *his*, which was an Affront to the *immediate* Authority of GOD himſelf. And it muſt be acknowledged, that all Laws receive an additional *Sanction*, proportionate to the Power and Majeſty of the Law-giver.

But, not to inſiſt longer upon an Argument, which, if it ſhould be overrul'd, our Propoſition will nevertheleſs hold good; *viz.* That *Man was liable to Sin in the greateſt Solitude*; and conſequently, That *his Fall is no ſubſtantial Objection againſt Society*: We will proceed to reflect a little upon thoſe *Qualities* of a *rational Being*, which would have been wholly uſeleſs, had he been doom'd to linger out his Life, in the ſilent manner of his *Fellow-Brutes*.

And

And to what Purpoſe can we imagine, that the noble Faculties of *Thinking*, *Obſerving*, *Arguing* and *drawing Conſequences*, could be given us; unleſs to *communicate* our Obſervations and Diſcoveries to the reſt of our Species? To which end, the *Organs* of *Speech*, added to thoſe *other Endowments*, plainly point out to us the proper uſe which ſhould be made of them. And whoever takes but a *tranſient* view of the admirable Mechaniſm of the *articulate Organs* in a *Human Body*, muſt be naturally led to imagine, that GOD, who never made any Thing *in vain*, would not have beſtow'd ſo much glorious Work to no *end* or *purpoſe*. And as the *Glory* of GOD, and our own *Salvation*, is the ultimate *End* of our Creation; I queſtion whether that *End* can be ſo well anſwer'd any other way, as by employing the fore-mention'd *Faculties*

culties and *Powers*, as *Means* to excite each other to the Practice of the neceſſary Duties of our ſeveral Relations.

But, certainly, there is no need of further Arguments to prove the *Neceſſity* and *Pleaſure* of Society. The Practice of all Mankind is a ſufficient Teſtimony on our Side; Excepting only ſome *Few*, who, out of a pretence to *Heroick Sanctity*, abandon the *Converſation*, together with the *Vices* and *Follies* of the World. Happy is it for *them*, if they carry none *of theſe* into their Privacy! But ſuch a Retreat looks more like a *ſullen Pride*, or *baſe Deſertion* of their *Poſt*, than an *exalted* Virtue, and *abhorrence* of Vice. But as it is my preſent buſineſs to apply my ſelf to the *active* Part of the World; I ſhall leave *them* in their beloved Obſcurity, and haſten to what remains, without further Digreſſion.

Since

Since then a State of *Friendſhip* and *Amity* is abſolutely neceſſary to the *well-being* of Societies in general; and ſince *all Communities* are made up of *ſeveral Particulars*; It follows, that what conſtitutes the *Happineſs* of the *Whole*, muſt be *neceſſary* to *every Individual*. Which is ſo true in this Caſe, that we look upon it to be a Compendium of the Miſeries of any *one*, to ſay, *He is Friendleſs*. And certainly, no one Expreſſion can ſo fully comprize all the unhappineſs that a human Creature is ſubject to. But *this*, like many other *Phraſes*, is not always properly applied: And we are never more beſide the truth in *gueſſing* at the Circumſtances of our Neighbours, than in this particular. For though the Rich and Great have *many* that are called *Friends*, yet it may with good reaſon be doubted, whether *one* among their numerous Fol-

lowers deſerves that Character. What I mean, when I ſpeak of FRIENDSHIP in this *reſtrain'd* Notion of it, in contra-diſtinction to the *Friendſhip* of *Communities*, cannot poſſibly be applied to a *general* Acquaintance; but muſt be confin'd to the *particular* and *amiable* Converſation of *One* or *Two*, who by a likeneſs of *Diſpoſition*, and other correſpondent *Qualities*, are entitled to the glorious *Epithet* of *Friends*. But it is only neceſſary *here*, juſt to mention the difference between an *Acquaintance* and a *Friend*: We ſhall have occaſion to deſcribe it more particularly *hereafter*. All I ſhall at preſent inſiſt on, is, that it is only theſe *peculiar* Correſpondencies and *ſtrict* Unions, that are able to give the true *reliſh* to Converſation, and indeed to make Life it ſelf *ſupportable*. Which is ſo univerſally acknowledged, that *all* Mankind either have, or *fancy* they have, ſome ſuch boſom *Friend*: And

all equally pretend to be qualified for this ſublime Character; which ſurely muſt be an *amiable* one, ſince thus *univerſally aſſumed*.

And if it be granted, (as ſurely it muſt,) That theſe *peculiar Friendſhips* are neceſſary to the Happineſs of *every Perſon*, who has any Idea of *Social Pleaſure*; Then, *Women* ſure may very juſtly put in *their* Claim to it; ſince *they* may be ſuppoſed to make up one half of thoſe who call themſelves *Rational*. But notwithſtanding *that*, methinks I ſee a contemptuous Smile ariſe in the Face of a *Maſculine* Reader, (if any of that *Sex* ſhould vouchſafe to prove ſo,) at the mention of *Female Friendſhip*: But neither *their* Smiles or Frowns ſhall ever check *my* Proceeding, in vindication of our Pretenſions to *Virtue*, and *Happineſs*, the Reward of it.

And

And before *Friendſhip* be quite exploded, and laugh'd out of the *Female* World; it is but reaſonable they ſhould *prove*, we are unworthy of it. This indeed they *pretend* to do, by aſſerting that *We are ſo.* But, with all due Submiſſion to their *maſculine* Logick; Aſſertions *only*, will never go for *Proofs.* But *ſome* are ſo condeſcending as to give us this good-natur'd reaſon, why we ſhould not aſpire to the Pleaſures of *Friendſhip:* Becauſe *we, poor Souls! are by Nature form'd too weak, to ſupport ſo lofty a Character.* This likewiſe is an Aſſertion that has never yet been proved even to a *Probability*; and therefore cannot poſſibly be argued from, fairly. But if *Women* be ſuch weak deſpicable Creatures, and unfit to contract a bond of *Friendſhip* with *one* equally mean and contemptible with *themſelves*; how unqualify'd are *they* to enter into the

ſtrict

ſtrict Union of *Marriage*, with *one* of a *native* Superiority of Soul? But this is a Conſequence they never *avowedly* own, whatever their *ſecret* Sentiments may be; becauſe it is not for their Intereſt. Perhaps *Friendſhip* does not come into *their* account of *Marriage*; but according to *my* diſtinct Notion of that State, I always thought a *perfect Friendſhip* fundamentally neceſſary to the Happineſs of it. And that Opinion is the more confirm'd, becauſe the great * Mr. *Norris* has prov'd it *poſſible*, beyond Contradiction, for the *Wife* to be capable of a *perfect Friendſhip*. (And if it be *poſſible*, it is certainly *expedient*.) This is a generous Conceſſion, which we muſt not expect from any of *leſs* Candour than that *Author*: But this *one* is ſufficient for our Purpoſe, and has prov'd as much

* Letter of the Idea of *Friendſhip*.

for

for us, as we can desire. For, if any *one Woman* be capable of it, then *all may*; and it can be from no inherent Defect in them, as they are *Women*, that *all* are *not*. But we need not take up with a *speculative Proof* alone; we have an Example of a very extraordinary Nature, in the *Holy Scripture*, of the force of *Friendship* in a *female* Soul: For, sure the Affection of *Ruth* to her *Mother-in-Law*, can be accounted nothing *less*. The *Terms* of Expression, which *she* uses to prevail to attend *Naomi*'s Fortune, are exceeding strong, and agreeable to the generous Sentiments of her Mind. She resolves *that no Accidents or Inconveniencies in Life, nor even Death it self, shall ever separate them.* A Resolution truly worthy of the *noble Principle* from whence it sprung! And *Sacred* History affords us various *other* Instances, that *Women were* endued with Faculties,

Ruth i. 16, 17.

culties, which they are *now* denied to poſſeſs; and yet they are not mention'd as *Prodigies*, or *preſaging any*. But *theſe* have been already enumerated by an * *ingenious Advocate* of our *own Sex*, with ſo much advantage, that I need not inſiſt further on them. Only thus much I will venture to aſſert; that our Adverſaries cannot bring one Precedent from thoſe *Divine Records*, for that contemptuous Treatment *they* generally beſtow upon *us*, as *poor*, *weak*, *trifling* Creatures! hardly actuated by immortal Souls, and little better than *mere* Machines! But if they are ſo generous to allow us *any* Souls, yet that they are of a *lower* Claſs, and vaſtly inferior to *their own*: And conſequently, that *we* are incapable of *Reaſoning* and *Judging*, and know no more than is juſt before *us*, and perhaps not *that*, without *their* Direction.

* See the *Preface* to Reflections on Marriage.

But if this be really the Caſe; how came it to paſs, that the Method which our *Saviour* made uſe of, to convince the World of the Truth of his Goſpel, was the ſame both for *Men* and *Women?* In all *his* Diſcourſes, *he* apply'd himſelf to the *Reaſon* of his Hearers: Now, had *Women* been ſo deſtitute of *this Faculty*, they could not have been converted by the *Conviction* of it. And though the Preaching of the Goſpel was accompany'd with *many* Miracles; yet we never find this was *one*, that our Lord created *new* Capacities in his Audience; only made uſe of *thoſe* they had before. And as the *manner* of Addreſs to both Sexes was equal; ſo likewiſe are the *Duties* enjoin'd, and the *Vices* prohibited. And St. *Paul* aſſures us, that *there is neither Male nor Female; but we are all one in Chriſt Jeſus.* From all which, it is very plain, *We* are capable of the *beſt*

Gal. iii. 28.

Things;

Things; and if *they* deny us to be qualified for *meaner*, we will not contend about *that*, but leave *them* in quiet Poſſeſſion, without once repining at their Injuſtice. But, after all, 'tis more than probable, that when the *Men* ſo ſtrenuouſly inſiſt on the *weakneſs* of our Minds; they expreſs their Wiſhes that they *were* ſo, rather than their Conviction that they *are* ſo.

However, all our Pretenſions to *Reaſoning Faculties* will avail us little, unleſs we can be prevail'd with to exerciſe them. And nothing ſure can be a more uſeful Employment for them, than the Study of *Friendſhip*; to which, all the *Qualifications* that are *Eſſential*, are alſo neceſſary to the making us *good Chriſtians*: Which, I think, has been fully proved to come within the verge of our Underſtandings. But as an Error in it may be of fatal Conſequence; and as we are ve-

ry liable to Impoſition in this Caſe; (which proceeds from our native tendency to contract theſe tender Intimacies; and from the undiſguiſed Honeſty of thoſe Hearts where this Inclination is moſt predominant, which prompts *them* to believe *others* as ſincere as *themſelves*:) Therefore we ought to be well verſed in the *Theory*, before we venture upon the *Practic* part.

The Misfortunes that *many* have been betray'd into, by falſe pretences of *Friendſhip*, are ſo numerous, that from thence *ſome* have prohibited the very Attempt of ſucceeding better. But certainly nothing is more abſurd, than a Reſolution to aboliſh whatever, by the wickedneſs of the World, *may* be abuſed. And becauſe a Thing *has been* ſubſervient to vile purpoſes, therefore to deny the *uſe* of it in the moſt *laudable manner*, would be to *Reform* quite away, every Thing valuable a-

mongſt

mongſt us. At this rate of Arguing, all *Religion* ought to be deſtroy'd; becauſe *Pretences* to it have frequently been made by thoſe, who only did ſo for a *Mask* to thoſe Deſigns, as could not be carried on *avowedly*. And becauſe ſome *ſpecious Friendſhips* have prov'd *bonds of Iniquity*; from thence to infer that *all* are ſo; is juſt as reaſonable, as it would be to aſſert, that *becauſe there have been numerous falſe Religions*, therefore *there is no one true*.

Inſtead therefore of aſſenting to theſe *falſe Concluſions*, I earneſtly intreat every Woman to ſtand upon her Guard with the utmoſt Watchfulneſs, when ſhe meets with any *extraordinary Proteſtations* of Affection and Fidelity: For, generally *none* are *ſo* defective of either, as *thoſe* who profeſs it *moſt*. Eſpecially, if ſhe be a *Young Lady* of *Fortune*, ſhe cannot be too cautious in

this

this Affair; for then *ſhe* is liable to ten thouſand Misfortunes of this kind, which Perſons in a *lower Station* are in no danger of. And the *younger She* is, the more likely is *She* to be attack'd *by*, and the leſs able to diſcover the fallacy *of* ſuch Pretences. There are never wanting Numbers of *fawning Sycophants*, who will be always endeavouring to introduce *themſelves* into *her* good Opinion, by *flattering her Vices*, and *feeding her Vanity*. And if it be *her* unhappineſs not to enjoy a *free* Converſation, and *open* Deportment with *her Mother*; at that *Age* when *ſhe* may reaſonably expect to be admitted into a Share of her *Confidence* and *Familiarity*; *She* will then *almoſt* unavoidably fall a Prey to *thoſe* with whom *ſhe* may uſe thoſe Liberties, *ſhe* is unjuſtly denied in Her Company; and may, with good *appearance* of Reaſon, think *them* much better *Friends*, before

before whom *ſhe may* expreſs her Sentiments, and be applauded for all *ſhe ſays and does*; than *her Mother*, who perhaps never found any fault with *her* till *ſhe* was paſt her Infancy, and after that will ſuffer no ſingle *Word* or *Action* to paſs uncondemned in her Preſence. Indeed, oftentimes they are *both* very juſtly exceptionable; but that ought, *generally ſpeaking*, to be charg'd more as the *Mother*'s fault than *her own*. And conſidering what miſerable Educations moſt *Daughters* have beſtow'd upon *them*, the only wonder is, *they* ever *do well*, inſtead of ſometimes *erring*. Moſt *Mothers* make Play-Things of their *Children* at *that Age*, when they are fitteſt to receive Inſtruction and Correction: And when they are arrived at, what one would wiſh might prove, *Years* of *Diſcretion*, thoſe Vices and Follies which were look'd upon with *connivance* or *approbation* before,

before, are *then* grown too predominant, not to give *horror* to the miſtaken *Parent*. But I ſhall not take upon *me* to treat of *Education*, further than as it falls in with my *preſent* Subject. I have not vanity enough to think I could uſe any Arguments, or offer any Inſtructions, that would be prevalent; when thoſe excellent *Treatiſes*, that are already written for that Purpoſe, have hitherto been ſo wretchedly ineffectual. But I cannot forbear recommending the *Archbiſhop of* Cambray's *Education of a Daughter*, to the Study of *all* who have that important Truſt committed to their charge: For which they muſt, doubtleſs, give a ſtrict Account; therefore they ought to be very diligent, that they may *do it with Joy, and not with Grief*.

But to return. There is no Caution more neceſſary for a young Perſon, than that *ſhe* ſhould by no means

liſten to *them* as her *Friends*, who are ready upon all occaſions to hear, and join in, with her Complaints of *her Parents*. For, by that means *they* get an intereſt in *her* Heart, before She *her ſelf* knows it: Neither are ſuch *Repoſitors* to be truſted on any account; for it is odds but they betray *her* Secrets to *thoſe*, whoſe Conduct is the Subject of them. And beſides, having thus put her ſelf in *their* Power, *ſhe* is obliged to perform whatever *they* dictate; be it ever ſo abſurd or diſagreeable.

And in order effectually to prevent all theſe Inconveniences, let *her* never contract a fondneſs for *mean* Perſons, and *Servants* eſpecially. For though it is a juſt Apothegm, That *a faithful Servant is an humble Friend*; yet it is ſo difficult to find *one* who deſerves the *former* Epithet, that *a Lady* ought to be very cautious how *She* beſtows

the *latter*. For which reaſon, it is much the ſafeſt way, never to make *Companions of them*; and then there will be no danger *She* ſhould be betray'd by *them* to Ruin and Infamy: A Calamity that has often happen'd to the *greateſt* Families; and the *greater* they are, they may be *perhaps* the more expoſed to ſuch a Misfortune.

But, of all Things, *our Sex* in general ought to guard aſſiduouſly againſt the Addreſſes of *thoſe*, who approach them with *Applauſe* and *Commendation*. For, *they* may very certainly conclude *ſuch* to have ſome miſchievous Deſign; to ſerve *their own* Intereſt is the leaſt; but very likely, to *undermine theirs*, who are ſo weak to liſten to *their Syren* Song. Juſt *Praiſe* is certainly deſirable, or elſe *Flattery* would not be ſo ſucceſsful: But even *that* ought never to be given before *their Faces* who deſerve it; for the

greater

greater the *Merit*, the leſs agreeable it will be to hear it. And if they do *not* deſerve it, *they* who dare to offer it, ought to meet with *ſomething* elſe inſtead of *Reward*, for thus openly affronting their Judgment and Conſcience.

To all which may be added, as an *unexceptionable* Rule; that, if duly attended to, will effectually prevent Impoſition in this Affair; That all *Profeſſions* of *Friendſhip* are to be totally rejected from *thoſe*, who can *poſſibly* be intereſted in the Caſe. Therefore every young Lady (for to *ſuch* I chiefly dictate, as needing Aſſiſtance moſt,) ought to conſider, in what Particulars the Perſon applying to her *is indigent*; and if it be *at all* probable, that the bettering her *outward* Condition can be her aim; *She* ought by no means to comply with the Propoſal, but fly

the Author of it, as *one* who is not only incapable of *Friendſhip*, but deſtitute of *Honeſty*. I do not mean by this, that *thoſe* are to be ſhunn'd, who apply in a *juſt* and *open manner* for relief of their Neceſſities, to *them* who are *able* to ſupply them. No; ſo far from *that*, I know no Diſpoſition ſo *well* prepar'd for diſcharging the Offices of *Friendſhip*, as that of a *charitable* Perſon: *Friendſhip* being often *defin'd* to be *intenſe*, *mutual Charity*. But *thoſe* I am *now* ſpeaking of, cannot plead either *Neceſſity* or *Merit*, to render *them* fit Objects of Benevolence, in *any* Senſe of the word; and Self-preſervation ought effectually to prevent their becoming *ſo*. Thoſe who are baſe enough to proſtitute the Sacred Name of *Friend* to their own *by*-ends, deſerve to be treated as the vileſt of Impoſtors. And as *our Saviour* has

always expreſs'd the utmoſt abhorrence of *Hypocriſy*; we *may*, without forfeiting our *Chriſtianity*, very juſtly avoid the Converſation of *thoſe*, whoſe Self-intereſt is the *only* Foundation of their amity. Indeed, in the unequal diſtribution of the Poſſeſſions of *this* World, it does too often happen, that *People* of very *great Merit* are not ſo plentifully provided for, as *thoſe* who leſs deſerve it. And in this Caſe, the narrowneſs of their Fortune is, perhaps, a greater misfortune to *others* than *themſelves*: Becauſe *their Modeſty* makes them ſhy of *accepting* Offers of *Friendſhip*; and effectually prevents *their* making *Advances* that way, to *thoſe* whom *they* eſteem *their Superiors*; though oftentimes a little paltry Money is the *only* pretence they have to that Diſtinction. What I have here ſaid, cannot affect *theſe*; but is only deſign'd

deſign'd againſt *ſuch*, who ſollicitouſly *perſonate* a generous *Friend*, when their Circumſtances make it reaſonable to believe, nothing is farther from their Intention.

But it may be thought, that all the *Impediments* hitherto enumerated, will entirely vaniſh, if we change the Scene from *Inferiors* to thoſe in a *higher* Rank. But if we conſider, that the *outward* Acquiſitions of Wealth or Quality, *alone* conſtitute *Superiors*; and not *innate* Virtue, and *real* Merit; we may conclude, that we are like to meet with Obſtructions to *Friendſhip* among *theſe*, as well as thoſe *below* us. Beſides, in this *profuſe Age*, *they* are not always poſſeſs'd of large Fortunes, who *appear* to be ſo. And although it may be imagin'd a Baſeneſs *none* could be guilty of; yet there have been undoubted Inſtances of *ſome*, whoſe Extravagancies have made them prey upon

on *others*, and thoſe *their Inferiors* too, under the ſpecious Pretext of *Friendſhip*. So that we have no more Security againſt the Dictates of Self-Intereſt in *this*, than in the *lower Claſs*.

But there are *others*, who make warm *Profeſſions* of Affection and Sincerity, to *Her* whom they find ſuſceptible of *them*; for no other reaſon, than to dive into the ſecret Receſſes of *her Soul*, in order to make *them* the Subject of their *perfidious Wit* and *Raillery*, the next Opportunity they have of laying aſide the Mask, without being diſcover'd by the *deceiv'd Author* of their barbarous Entertainment. Such Perſons *ſcatter Firebrands, Arrows and Death; and ſay, Am I not in Sport?* So that there is in *both* Stations, we find, great Caution and Prudence neceſſary, to diſcover whether *thoſe* who profeſs it, are not incapable of *Friendſhip*. Prov. xxvi. 18, 19.

Hither-

Hitherto we have treated our Subject *negatively*; we come now to consider *positively*, the Qualities and Dispositions absolutely necessary to the *Forming a Friend.*

The first *Essential* then, and that which is productive of almost all the other, is *Strict Virtue.* By which I mean, a *native good disposition* of the *Will*, determin'd to perform whatever a *well-inform'd Understanding* shall dictate to be *Just* and *Reasonable.* And as it is absolutely necessary to the *Rectitude* of the *Will*, that there be a *Sound Judgment*; so, in order to require *that*, one inspir'd with the love of *Virtue*, will not fail to use all methods of Instruction. In which enquiry, they will find *no System* so capable to direct them, as that of *the Gospel*; whose Precepts are back'd with such powerful Sanctions to enforce the Practice

ſtice of them: And therefore *they* will immediately embrace it, and never after *wilfully* depart from that perfect *Rule* of *Life*. It may perhaps be ſaid, that *we* (living in a *Chriſtian* Country) are all admitted into the Pale of Chriſt's Church, and therefore obliged to perform the Duties of Chriſtianity, almoſt *involuntarily*; Baptiſm being adminiſtred *to Infants* incapable of chuſing for themſelves. But notwithſtanding this *early* Pre-engagement, it is moſt certain, that embracing Chriſtianity to any *good Purpoſe*, muſt be an Act of Deliberation and Choice; when the *Reaſoning Faculties* are ſtrong enough for ſuch a Scrutiny. And it is owing *alone* to the want of a well-inclin'd *Will*, that ſo *many* who *name the Name of Chriſt*, are ſo far from *departing from all iniquity*, that they are only *titularly* his Diſciples. 2 Tim. ii. 19.

But as *Virtue*, both in the utmoſt Latitude, and moſt reſtrain'd Senſe of

it, is abſolutely neceſſary to the exiſtence of *Friendſhip*; Therefore we ought to have all the aſſurance poſſible to be had from a *Mortal*, that is, a *fallible Creature*, that their *Virtue* is immoveable. And the greateſt Probability of *that*, is where the *Practice* of *Religion* proceeds from a *ſtrong Conviction* of the *Underſtanding*, procur'd by a *well-diſpos'd Inclination*. That *Virtue*, under this *compound* Idea, is eſſential to *Friendſhip*, will readily appear; if we conſider, that no *one* can be a *Friend* to another, who is not *their own*; which no *vicious* Perſon can be: For *Friendſhip*, as well as all *other* branches *of Charity*, muſt *begin at home*. Beſides, a ſtrong Affection either proceeds *from* a likeneſs of Diſpoſition; or neceſſarily tends *to it*. Therefore we ought not to riſque our *own Integrity*, by fondneſs for *thoſe* who are deſtitute of it; for either our Eſteem of *them* will ſoon vaniſh, and *ſo* no *Friendſhip* can commence;

mence; or elſe *we* muſt apoſtatize from *our Virtue*, from whence *Leagues of Sin* may ariſe, but no *bond of Friendſhip*.

The next Thing we ſhould look for, is *good Senſe*. Indeed, but ſmall Time is requir'd for this Examination; a much leſs acquaintance will inform us what Share any Perſon poſſeſſes of *this Eſſential*, than can poſſibly convince us they are not defective in the *foregoing*. And we are ſeldom longer in Suſpence, whether *any one* is Ingenious or not, than till *they* have an opportunity of ſpeaking; though a very ſhort Sentence; the *manner* and *air* of doing which, *generally* gives an unalterable Biaſs to our opinion of them ever after. However, I cannot think this haſty method of Judging, *altogether equitable*. *Some* being very entertaining, and *apparently* endued with a good *Underſtanding*, at our *firſt* Acquaintance with them; who *afterwards* diſcover their real *Ignorance*, when their Knowledge regarding only *one* ſingle

Thing, is quite exhauſted. In *others*, again, the Rational Faculties lie *latent* and *conceal'd*; to which a reſerv'd Temper may much contribute: Of *theſe* it is impoſſible *ſoon* to paſs a *true* Judgment. *They*, like the *Flint*, requiring *Motion* to make *them ſhine*; we muſt try them by cloſe Application; and force their Sentiments from them, *almoſt* whether they will or no. This is unavoidably the Caſe, where profound *Modeſty* is join'd to a ſhy *Diſpoſition*. And *ſuch a one* bids very fair for our Eſteem in this particular, who, upon repeated tryals, mends upon our hands; and the leſs *ſuch a Perſon* ſpeaks, they may reaſonably be ſuppoſed to exerciſe their *thinking Faculty* the more. But ſo hard is it to lay down *Rules* in this affair, without *numerous Exceptions*, that even *here* we may be miſtaken: Reſerve, in *ſome*, concealing defective Senſe; as well as veiling bright Parts in *others*. Since then the uncertainty is ſo great, it appears

pears neceſſary to add a Definition of the *Phraſe, good Senſe*, in its true and genuine meaning. But to do *that* accurately, ſeems to require a larger Share of it, than I have the vanity to think I poſſeſs: And I believe it is much eaſier to determine what it is *not*, than what it *is*. However, without running any great Riſque, I think I may aſſert, *Good Senſe*, to conſiſt, *in a full and free Exerciſe of the Thinking Power in the Soul*: Preſuppoſing *that Faculty* to be *entire*, and not under the misfortune of any *Natural defect*; which I conceive to be defin'd by the *Term, good natural Parts*. Which, with the external helps of *Reading* and *Converſation*, will ſoon ariſe to *good Senſe*, in the *full* and moſt *extenſive Notion* of it. This is ſo neceſſary to render even *common* Converſation agreeable; that I need not be at the pains to *prove*, how highly requiſite it is to procure and maintain the *intimate* Correſpondence we are now treating

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ing of; Therefore will go on in the third place, to ſhew the neceſſity of,

Fidelity and *Faithfulneſs*; in regard of *Secrets* and *Promiſes*. And firſt, we muſt be convinc'd of a Perſon's *Fidelity* in keeping all *Promiſes*, before we venture any *Secrets* to their Truſt. And although *ſome* who are *ſcrupulouſly* Juſt, are exceeding cautious of making Promiſes, whereby to diſcover their exact Performance of them; yet ſuch conſcientious *Aſſertors* of Truth may be depended on ſafely, without this particular demonſtration. But in *this Age*, few will give us the trouble to look for any further Proof of their Veracity, than the performance of thoſe Agreements they are very ready to make. When therefore, by long Experience, we find *one* who may be depended on, in this Branch, even where it is *to their own diſadvantage*; we may pretty ſafely repoſe *Secrets* in that Breaſt ſo tenacious of Juſtice. But as a miſtaken Truſt may be of moſt pernicious Conſequence, it will be much the wiſeſt way to prove the ſafe-

Pſal. xv. 5.

ty of it by ſmall, inconſiderable tryals: *Small*, I mean, as to the miſchief a diſcovery of them might do; but *large*, in regard of the aſſurance we might thence have, of *Faithfulneſs*, where we pleas'd our ſelves with the hopes of it. For, one of the great *Ends of Friendſhip*, being to *divide* Grief, and *double* Joy to each Party; therefore there muſt be a free unreſerv'd communication of each other's affairs: In which, it is certain, there muſt be many Things neceſſarily conceal'd from the general Knowledge of the World. If therefore we have not well ſecur'd *this Point*, inſtead of *friendly* Advice and Aſſiſtance, equal to our many Exigencies, we ſhall fall unpitied, by numberleſs vexations and diſappointments, a Victim to our own fond Credulity.

To all theſe *Qualifications*, muſt be added a *Generous, Grateful, Sweet Temper*: It being impoſſible *Friendſhip* ſhould ſubſiſt with a contrary Diſpoſition. For, *Love* and *Tenderneſs* of *Affection* being the only *Cement* in this Union;

Union; *that* can never be intenſe, but towards a Soul thus adorn'd and refined. Beſides, as ſuch a Temper only can at firſt introduce this delightful Commerce; ſo is it always improving it, by *magnifying* the Favours it receives, and *overlooking* thoſe it confers. Indeed, according to the *Sieur de Charron's Idea* of *Friendſhip*, there can be no ſuch thing as *Favours* and *Obligations* in a *perfect one*: But as they muſt all, in their firſt commencement, be what *he* calls *Common*, before they arrive at *Perfection*; ſo there muſt be mutual Obligations and Acknowledgments, before the Union can be ſo entire, that *their Souls are* (as the ſame *Author* elegantly expreſſes it) *abſorb'd* and *mingled with each other*. And although all Separate Property *then* ceaſes; yet that Benignity of Diſpoſition is ſtill abſolutely neceſſary, to *preſerve*, what it has ſo happily *begun*.

Of Wiſdom, L. 3. c. 7.

Thus much then ſhall ſuffice for the *Eſſentials of Friendſhip*: More there need not be; but *theſe* muſt be, in as

full

full an extent as poſſible. And here I cannot forbear asking *thoſe*, who would debar *our Sex* of the Pleaſures and Advantages of *Friendſhip*; *Which of theſe Qualifications Women muſt neceſſarily want?* But if they *may* all be found in a *female* Soul; then *we* cannot with any Juſtice be excluded from *this* application of them, where concurrent Circumſtances make it practicable. And pray, where is the *Abſurdity* of ſuppoſing a *Woman* endued with *Moral* and *Religious Virtue*, with *good Senſe*, *Veracity*, *Gratitude* and *Generoſity*? So far is it from being *one*, that if we examine them ſeverally, I doubt not, we ſhall find as *many* Votaries at leaſt, among *our Sex*, as the *other* can boaſt of: Eſpecially conſidering the *vaſt* Advantages *they* enjoy as to *outward* Helps, excluſive of *native Superior Genius*, which, as *Men*, they arrogate to *themſelves*.

And firſt; So far are even the *other Sex* from denying *Religion* to be part of a *female* Character, that they allow

it us, even to the degree of *Superſtition*. But though *they* are often miſtaken, in laying *this* to the charge of *thoſe*, who are as free from it, as *many of them* are from the profeſſion of *any Religion*; Yet their Suppoſition that it proceeds from a *wrong* Principle, at the ſame time neceſſarily ſuppoſes it *to exiſt*. And indeed, both *Moral* and *Religious Virtue* ſeems more and more to become the peculiar Characteriſtick of *our Sex*: *This* being the only Poſſeſſion the *other* are contented *we* ſhould engroſs to our ſelves; but here, *they* are as humble and paſſive, in *their* deſire of Acquiſition, as in all *other* Caſes they would be glad if *We were*. And it is very remarkable for our Honour, that when any *one* among *us* lays aſide her *Virtue* and *Modeſty*, and commences a Prodigy of *Vice* and *Wickedneſs*; *She* is known by no other Epithet, than that of a MASCULINE *Woman*, and immediately avoided by *all* who would preſerve *their Innocency*, as a *Monſter in Nature*. Our Claim to *this* Particular,

cular, being thus indiſputable; let us ſee whether we can make it out to

The Second, which is, *good Senſe*. And conſidering the diſadvantages and hardſhips, moſt of *us* are under, from the little Improvement that is allow'd *us*; it is no wonder to find many, whoſe Underſtandings are poor and fallow: The neceſſary conſequence of Neglect. But notwithſtanding this partial and unjuſt dealing, there are *many* who give daily Evidence of an *extenſive Capacity*, by acting prudently and unblamably in the moſt difficult Stations of Life, to which Providence allots *them*. But if it ſhould be thought no great difficulty, to act with applauſe in *private Life*; (which yet may be a miſtake, if we reflect what capricious Diſpoſitions *Women* are many times bound to *Pleaſe* and *Obey*;) there are not wanting Inſtances of the moſt conſummate Wiſdom, in Some of *our Sex* who have been plac'd in the moſt conſpicuous and exalted Sphere of Action; to wit, *Regal Power* and *Authority*: Of which our *own* Coun-

try has more than *once* enjoy'd the happy and extenſive Influence. Indeed, thoſe *Illuſtrious Princeſſes* had all the Advantages of *Art*, as well as *Nature* on their Side; And methinks the ſhining and uſeful Effects they produc'd in *them*, ſhould be an Encouragement ſufficient to procure *us* thoſe *Advantages*, which are generally barbarouſly with-held from *us*. But if we reflect what deſpicable Figures *Men* make without a *Liberal Education*, it would tempt one to think, our *Natural* Title to *good Senſe* was even *Superior to theirs*. For, *Men* are obliged to take great Pains, and be at a large Expence of Time and Money too, to become *wiſe* and *ingenious*; and *Women*, without any ſuch aſſiſtance, give manifeſt proofs that *they* are *ſo*, by the ſingle Force of *Native Genius*.

But perhaps it may be more difficult to prove, Thirdly, that *Women* are able to keep a *Secret* entruſted to their Care. Indeed, our Weakneſs in this particular has been a heavy Charge againſt us for *many Ages*: Inſomuch that *Portia* was obli-

obliged to prove by a tormenting Experiment, that *she* was exempt from this *feminine* Frailty. But if *She*, by the bare Strength of a *Roman Resolution*, inspir'd by an *Education* worthy of *Cato's* Daughter, could resist the potent Impulses of pungent Pain, to disclose the Secret that caused it: Why should it be thought *impossible*, or at all *improbable* for a *modern Female*, assisted by the far *nobler* Principles of *Christian Fortitude*, to be faithful to the greatest Trust that can be committed to her care?

Lastly, *Generosity*, *Gratitude*, and *Good-Nature*, are so apparently the *peculiar* Properties of the *female* Sex, that there is no occasion to enter upon a particular Demonstration of what, I believe, was never controverted: *They* being oftener tax'd with *too* large a Share of these *Qualifications*, than with a *total* failure of them.

If then it is possible for *our Sex* to be adorn'd with all these *Virtues* and *Graces*; and if *some* possess them in an eminent Degree; as I dare aver *many do*;

What

What pity is it, that *others*, charm'd by *their lovely* and *attractive* Example, do not ſtrive to emulate, and at leaſt equal *them* in the poſſeſſion of ſo real *a Good?* Can we form an *Idea* of any thing more amiable on this ſide Heaven, than a *Woman* govern'd and actuated in all *her Thoughts, Words* and *Actions*, by a ſtrong conviction of *Religion? Such a one* loves Virtue, and practiſes it, not ſo much out of a ſordid Fear, and dread of Puniſhment; as from a full aſſurance that it is moſt ſuitable to the Dignity of a *Rational Creature*: And, inſpir'd with a laudable Ambition, endeavours to acquire all the *imitable* Perfections of *her* great Creator; whom *ſhe* loves and adores, as the only Supreme Satisfying GOOD! And will therefore arduouſly endeavour after an Union with that Gracious Being, who hath promiſed to be the *Reward of all*, who humbly and diligently *ſeek Him*. But as *She* muſt wait for this perfection of Happineſs till the *next Life*; *She* will, during her Stay in *this*, chuſe to aſſociate and converſe with

thoſe, who come the neareſt to the *Divine Nature* in purity and holineſs. With *theſe*, *ſhe* will contract a cloſe and intimate *Friendſhip*; with *them ſhe* will repoſe the *Arcana's* of her Soul; and from *them* will receive wholſome and uſeful Advice; which *ſhe* will chearfully return with a generous Sincerity, whenever their Exigencies ſhall require it. Thus reciprocally receiving and repaying good Offices, with a calm unruffled Mind, amidſt the Sun-ſhine of Proſperity, and the rough Blaſts of Adverſity; will *ſhe* innocently glide through this mortal State: And at length arrive at that bliſsful Region, where *Friendſhip* in the moſt exalted degree, is the Buſineſs of Eternity. Where no *Separate* Intereſts can interfere, to the detiment of the *whole*; but where All love, and are belov'd with an Ardency of Affection, pure and inextinguiſhable!

How Bleſt! how deſirable a State is *this!* There are *none* ſo totally abandon'd ſure, but would wiſh, *Thus to die* Numb. xxiii. 10.

the

the death of the Righteous! But the only *ſure* Introduction, is a Life ſo ſpent; and to do *that*, is not ſo eaſy as by many is imagin'd. No *one* who ever *thinks*, but muſt confeſs it much more eligible to practiſe all the *fore-mention'd Virtues*, than to live in open Neglect and Contempt of them. But it is not barely *aſſenting to*, and *approving* what is excellent, that will work a change: This, indeed, is a neceſſary *Prelude*; but whoever ſtops here, will be miſerably diſappointed. From *Aſſent* we muſt proceed to *Practice*; and never let the beautiful *Idea* of *Virtue* ſlip out of our Minds; but with an indefatigable Induſtry ſtill conform our ſelves to the Rules and Precepts *that* ſets us. But alas! how difficult, and (*almoſt*) impoſſible is this, to *one* whoſe Thoughts and Inclinations have always been buſied about the Pleaſures of *Senſe*! *Such a one* can have no adequate Notion of *Friendſhip*; but miſcals Aſſociates in Diverſion, and giddy thoughtleſs Companions, by the Name of *Friends*. It

is

is ſpeaking an unknown Language, to talk to *ſuch a Perſon*, of the ſublime and rapturous Enjoyments of a virtuous and diſintereſted *Friendſhip*. And it is well if we meet with no worſe Return, for thus waſting our time, than to be thought *enthuſiaſtick Viſionaries*, who are poſſeſs'd with ſome airy Imaginations, that never had Being, but in our *fantaſtick* Brain. *Theſe* are too far immerſed in *wilful* Ignorance, and *choſen* Folly, to receive any impreſſion from a Diſcourſe of this nature; but what will evaporate in their *keeneſt Raillery*, and *moſt poignant Wit*.

But there are *others*, from whom we hope better Things: Who are really *reaſonable Creatures*; and, conſcious that *they* are ſo, are willing to improve the Talents committed to *them* to the beſt advantage. It is to *theſe* only I expect to do any Service by the fore-going *Rules*: And I earneſtly intreat *them*, never to aſſume the Name or Character of *a Friend*, till they have contracted a *Habit* of all thoſe neceſſary *Qualifica-*

tions already ſpecified. And when they have thus ſecur'd *one Side*, let them be ſure not to engage themſelves in a *Bond of Friendſhip*, but with *thoſe* equally poſſeſs'd of theſe *Eſſentials*, which only can render it happy or permanent. Of this they can have no Proof, but by long Acquaintance, and repeated Tryals; and if upon the Scrutiny, they are convinc'd all *is right*; the Aſſociation cannot then too ſoon be engaged in, nor too cloſely adhered to; which will ſecure to them the greateſt Peace and Tranquility, Satisfaction and Pleaſure, they can poſſibly enjoy in *this* World. And this happy State is the more deſirable, becauſe thoſe who have been the moſt eminent Examples of *Virtue*, have given the moſt conſpicuous Inſtances of *heroick Friendſhip*: Of which, the moving Hiſtory of *Jonathan* and *David* is a glorious and convincing Proof. Nay, our bleſſed *Lord* himſelf was pleaſed to honour *this Character*, by aſſuming it in a very peculiar manner, as we read in the *eleventh Chapter* of the *Goſpel* recorded

1 Sam. xviii. 19, 20, &c.

Ver. 3. 5. 11. 35, 36.

corded by the *beloved Diſciple*. Since then *Friendſhip* both in its own Nature, and in thoſe amiable Patterns which it propoſes for our Imitation, is thus excellent and delightful; it is much to be lamented there are ſo few *modern* Inſtances of it. But this is more owing to Incapacity, than Ignorance of the Advantage of it. And this Impediment can only be removed *effectually*, by *thoſe* who are employed in the *Education* of our *Female Youth*. *That* being the proper Time to inſtil *Habits of Virtue*; to improve the *Underſtanding*, to inculcate *Juſtice* and *Veracity*, and to imprint *Gratitude* and *Generoſity*; when the Mind, as well as Body, is *ductile* and *flexible*. Were this Attempt made *early* enough, before any vicious Cuſtoms had taken place, there is good Reaſon to believe the Succeſs would abundantly repay *their* Pains, who ſhould think it a neceſſary Part of *their* Buſineſs to watch the *firſt* Dawn of *Reaſon*; and preſent nothing to its View, but what were agreeable to it,

in its native Purity. Would *Mothers* once be convinced of the Importance of their Charge; and were *they* capable of performing *their* Duty in this Point as they ought, we ſhould ſoon ſee the happy Effects of it. I will not ſay *none* would miſcarry, who were well educated, but it is probable very *few* would; eſpecially if the Work were begun, (as I before hinted) time enough: For it is the Maxim of inſpired Wiſdom, *Train up a Child in the way he ſhould go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it.* Virtue is ſo *convincingly* attractive, that one would think it almoſt impoſſible ever to be deſerted by *one*, who from *her* very *Infancy*, had been *reaſonably* taught to approve and practiſe it. And when the ſucceeding Superſtructure anſwers this good Foundation, what can be more reaſonable, or natural, than for the happy *Parent* to lay aſide the Auſterity of a *Governeſs*, and admit *her*, whom *ſhe* has amply qualified for it, into an entire *Friendſhip* and *Familiarity* with *her*? By this means

Prov. xxii. 6.

means ſtill continuing *her* watchful Guardian in the moſt effectual manner; and therefore ſecuring *her* againſt thoſe Evils, that *neceſſarily* attend an eſtrangement between theſe Relations. And when *ſhe* is thus inſtructed, both by *Precept*, and the more powerful *Oratory* of *Example*, in the Theory and Practice of *Friendſhip*: *She* will, when *her* acquaintance with *others*, who have been bleſs'd with the ſame Improvements, give *her* opportunity; ſoon be poſſeſs'd with a ſympathetick Affection for *them*. And an Approbation thus juſtly begun, will in due time ariſe to the full height of a generous and tender *Friendſhip*.

Moſt Writers confine this Union within the narrow bounds of *two*, or at moſt *three*. But I am of opinion, the neceſſity of thus contracting the Number, is more owing to the general corruption and depravity of *Human Nature*, than to any defect in the *Eſſence* of *Friendſhip*. And were it otherways, it would be an Objection, even againſt the Happineſs of *Heaven* it ſelf, and tempt one

to believe, the Felicity of that bleſſed Place would be more *extenſive*, were the Numbers who partake of it, *fewer*. But as this Notion (which I take to be a neceſſary conſequence of ſuch a contracted *Idea* of *Friendſhip*,) can never be admitted by *thoſe* who are at all acquainted with the *Revelations* we have of that State: So I think it very reaſonable, and what may be done not only with *ſafety*, but *advantage*; That *all* who are really worthy of it, be admitted into this Society; Suppoſing they are equally *known to*, and *approv'd by* each other. And conſidering the *prevalence* of *Vice*, in general, and the *negligence* of *Parents*, in particular; there is no danger ſo many ſhould be qualified, as to produce *any* inconvenience, could *that* poſſibly attend it.

And now, methinks, there needs not many Words to perſuade any *rational Perſon*, earneſtly to endeavour after all *thoſe Endowments*, which will render *them* belov'd and admir'd by *all*, whoſe approbation and eſteem is a real Honour;

Nay, which will endear *them* to the *Divine Almighty Being*, and consequently procure *them* certain happiness here, and in Eternity. *Who* would not endeavour to resemble those *happy Souls*, with whom we all hope to enjoy never-ceasing Bliss; in those Inclinations and Dispositions, which qualified *them* for the extatick happiness *they* are already possess'd of! But *who*, that is incapable of *Friendship here*, can be happy in the *enjoyment* of it in *Heaven*? And doubtless, it must be in the highest degree among *those blessed Spirits*, whose Charity is so extensive and universal, as to raise *Joy in them*, for the *Conversion of one repenting Sinner*. And we have reason to believe, that *many* of the *Angelic Host* are constantly employ'd in offices of kindness and beneficence, to the *Good* and *Pious*, even in this Life. And can we think this *pure* and *refin'd* Affection ceases, upon our Arrival in the other World? No, certainly; *there* it is in the *highest perfection*, and *only there* can be compleat. If then we have any desire after true substantial Happiness, (and *who* that has a Soul, has not?) we must be prepar'd and train'd up for it, by a due disposition of Mind *here*. And sure *this Argument* is sufficient, without *any other*, to enforce what I have been all along endeavouring to inculcate. And

Luk. xv. 7. & 10.

1 Cor. xiii. 8.

And if it were once applied seriously to our Hearts, as it certainly deserves to be; what a delightful Reformation should we see in *all* People of Reason and Reflection! Society would *then* be as pleasing and delightful, as it *now* is generally disagreeable and trifling to a serious thinking Person! No *one*, who really deserv'd it, would *then* have cause to complain, they were destitute of *that* Comfort in Adversity, *that* Partner in Prosperity, and *that* faithful Monitor in all States, *a disinterested Friend*! *Virtue* would *then* be recommended in the most moving manner, and justly venerated in all Stations: A mean Fortune could *then* no longer eclipse Substantial Merit; But *Vice alone* would be discountenanc'd, and forc'd, if possible, to blush at being singular! And, in one word, this Sublunary Region would be as happy, as the short Period of its Duration would permit it to be: And *we* should pass serenely from a State of *Probation* and *Tryal here*, to the possession of *endless* and *inconceivable Reward* in *Heaven*: To the bless'd Society of *Saints* and *Angels*, and the *glorified Spirits of just Men made perfect*: And to the Enjoyment of GOD, our Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier, to all Eternity!

FINIS.